

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. An apparatus for processing one or more documents, comprising:  
2 a color scanner for creating an image of each document;  
3 a memory for storing one or more document processing instructions associated  
4 with the presence or absence of one or more color swatches within the image; and  
5 a processor coupled to the color scanner and the memory, the processor  
6 controlling the color scanner, determining whether one or more color swatches are  
7 present or absent in the image and executing the document processing instructions  
8 associated with the presence or absence of the one or more color swatches.
- 1 2. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the processor removes the one or  
2 more color swatches from the image.
- 1 3. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 further comprising a storage device for saving  
2 the image.
- 1 4. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the document processing instructions  
2 indicate how the image will be stored.
- 1 5. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the document processing instructions  
2 indicate where the image will be stored.

- 1 6. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 further comprising:  
2 a document sorter coupled to the processor;  
3 a document feeder coupled to the color scanner, the processor and the document  
4 sorter; and  
5 the processor further controlling the document sorter and document feeder.
- 1 7. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the document processing instructions  
2 indicate how the documents are to be sorted.
- 1 8. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the color swatch is pre-printed.
- 1 9. The apparatus as recited in claim 6 wherein the color swatch is applied  
2 mechanically.
- 1 10. The apparatus as recited in claim 6 wherein the color swatch is applied manually.

1 11. A method for processing one or more documents, comprising the steps of:  
2 creating an image of each document;  
3 determining whether one or more color swatches are present or absent in the  
4 image; and  
5 executing one or more document processing instructions associated with the  
6 presence or absence of the one or more color swatches.

1 12. The method as recited in claim 11 further comprising the step of removing the one  
2 or more color swatches from the image.

1 13. The method as recited in claim 11 further comprising the step of saving the  
2 image.

1 14. The method as recited in claim 11 wherein the document processing instructions  
2 indicate how the image will be stored.

1 15. The method as recited in claim 11 wherein the document processing instructions  
2 indicate where the image will be stored.

1 16. The method as recited in claim 11 further comprising the step of sorting the  
2 document based on the document processing instructions.

1 17. The method as recited in claim 11 wherein the document processing instructions  
2 indicate how the documents are to be sorted.

- 1 18. The method as recited in claim 11 wherein the color swatch is pre-printed.
- 1 19. The method as recited in claim 11 further comprising the step of applying one or  
2 more color swatches to the document.
- 1 20. The method as recited in claim 19 wherein the color swatch is applied  
2 mechanically.
- 1 21. The method as recited in claim 19 wherein the color swatch is applied manually.

1 22. A computer program embodied on a computer-readable medium for processing  
2 one or more documents comprising:

3 a code segment for creating an image of each document;

4 a code segment for determining whether one or more color swatches are present  
5 or absent in the image; and

6 a code segment for executing one or more document processing instructions  
7 associated with the presence or absence of the one or more color swatches.

1 23. The computer program as recited in claim 22 further comprising a code segment  
2 for removing the one or more color swatches from the image.

1 24. The computer program as recited in claim 22 further comprising a code segment  
2 for saving the image.

1 25. The computer program as recited in claim 22 wherein the document processing  
2 instructions indicate how the image will be stored.

1 26. The computer program as recited in claim 22 wherein the document processing  
2 instructions indicate where the image will be stored.

1 27. The computer program as recited in claim 22 further comprising a code segment  
2 for sorting the document based on the document processing instructions.

- 1 28. The computer program as recited in claim 22 wherein the document processing  
2 instructions indicate how the documents are to be sorted.
- 1 29. The computer program as recited in claim 22 wherein the color swatch is pre-  
2 printed.
- 1 30. The computer program as recited in claim 22 further comprising a code segment  
2 for applying one or more color swatches to the document.